



News Release

Arizona Department of Public Safety

POST OFFICE BOX 6638 * PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85005-6638

Date: February 9, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Direct Inquiries to:

Lieutenant Ryan Young: (602) 223-2003

Sergeant Marcy Cox: (520) 746-4500

Arizona Department of Public Safety

Investigation: Sahuarita Police Department Child Pornography

In March 2006, the Arizona Department of Public Safety's Tucson Financial Fraud Unit was requested by the Sahuarita Police Department to conduct a criminal investigation into allegations of employee(s) tampering with, altering, or falsifying a public record. At the time that the alleged public record tampering was occurring, Sergeant Donald Lafreniere was Acting Chief of Police for Sahuarita and had brought this incident to the attention of the Town Manager. During interviews conducted between April and May 2006, investigators learned that Sgt. Lafreniere had security rights to the software program utilized by the Sahuarita Police Department. It was also learned that Sgt. Lafreniere had utilized a home computer to gain remote access to the Sahuarita Police Department's computer system.

In May 2006, investigators from the Arizona Department of Public Safety obtained a "Consent Search" from Sgt. Lafreniere, at his residence, and a Computer Forensic Examiner obtained an image from Sgt. Lafreniere's desktop computer. Sgt. Lafreniere had indicated that he had utilized this system to access work files. Sgt. Lafreniere also provided investigators with a personal lap top which he claimed had only been utilized for a Power Point presentation on behalf of the Sahuarita Police Department. An Arizona Department of Public Safety Computer Forensic Examiner later imaged this lap top and returned the system back to Sgt. Lafreniere, pending a full analysis.

One of the processes utilized by computer forensic examiners is to observe unallocated space on a hard drive for files that still exist and have not yet been written over. During the review of recovered files from this area, the Forensic Examiner noted that there were several picture files that contain images of written documents that were related to the Sahuarita Police Department. Since this may have evidentiary value for the investigation of allegations of tampering with a public record, additional analysis was conducted. It was at this point that the Computer Forensic Examiner noted seventeen (17) photographs depicting children in a sexually explicit manner. At the time of the discovery the lap top, with the original hard drive, had already been released back to the owner.

In August 2006, after consultation with the Arizona Attorney General's Office and the Chief of the Sahuarita Police Department on the new found child pornography contraband, the Arizona Department of Public Safety was again asked to open a second investigation, this time centered on possession of child pornography.

In September 2006, investigators from the Arizona Department of Public Safety served a search

warrant at Sgt. Lafreniere's residence to recover the lap top with the original hard drive evidence on it. A new image was obtained from the lap top and analysis of that data revealed that the computer's hard drive had been "wiped" utilizing a wiping program which had been previously installed. The child pornography images were no longer on the hard drive. The original images of child pornography had been found in a temporary internet cache file. This information was provided to the Arizona Attorney General's Office and no charges were filed on possession of child pornography due to a lack of evidence. Additionally, no charges were filed on tampering with a public record as a result of the first investigation also due to a lack of evidence.

Copies of the case files were released to the Chief of the Sahuarita Police Department for administrative action.

***INCLUDING COVER SHEET.**

IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE ALL PAGES, PLEASE TELEPHONE US IMMEDIATELY AT 223-2460 or 223-2310